

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1277

By Pinion

A RESOLUTION to congratulate the pastor and members of
Calvary Baptist Church on celebrating 80 years
of faithful service to God and humanity.

WHEREAS, the foundation of the just and orderly society enjoyed by our State and
nation since their beginnings is comprised of the many churches that thrive in our communities;
and

WHEREAS, one such strong and vital community of faith that for the past 80 years has
striven to serve God and the community of Union City and Obion County is Calvary Baptist
Church; and

WHEREAS, Calvary Baptist's earliest beginnings centered in Gibbs, a small community
east of Union City, at a time when dirt roads and few cars limited mobility, and people's lives
centered on church and community; when Nannie Rutledge, the grandmother of Lucille Pruitt,
came with her family to live in Gibbs, there was no church; and

WHEREAS, Nannie Rutledge and Gus White, Sr. joined forces to organize a Sunday
school, and the first service was held on the porch of a local grocery store; later, they moved
their non-denominational meetings to the school house; and

WHEREAS, in 1924, the church had its formal beginning when it was organized as
Gibbs Baptist Church with seven charter members; in 1928, the congregation purchased the
Gibbs School property and began to grow in membership, reaching 62 members by 1941, when
the first deacons were ordained, and 200 members by 1958; and

WHEREAS, the church purchased the Hiland School property where the church is now
located in the 1960s, renovated classrooms and moved the former auditorium to the present
site; in 1967, the name was changed to Calvary Baptist Church, and two years later the
congregation voted to build a new auditorium and sell bonds in the amount of \$138,000; and

WHEREAS, the first service in the new auditorium took place on February 7, 1970, and new ministries were added, including a Radio Ministry in 1971, and a Benevolent Ministry and a Bus Ministry in 1973; in 1975, the congregation voted to construct a Mission Activity Center costing \$90,000 which houses the educational ministries, sports activities and the crisis food ministry; and

WHEREAS, the decade of the eighties included a venture into the operation of a Christian School from 1982-88 and the enlargement of the sanctuary and other improvements totaling \$200,000 in 1982; mission teams were sent to India, Brazil, the Philippines, Canada, Puerto Rico, New York, Michigan, Ohio, South Dakota, Oklahoma, Colorado, West Virginia, Missouri, Texas, Louisiana, Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Calvary Baptist paid off all debts in 1997 and the following year entered into a "Journey of Faith" program which included renovation of the worship center and missions activity center at a cost of more than \$200,000, completing the project in 1999 debt-free; a new educational wing and office complex was completed in 2003 at a cost of \$1.8 million; and

WHEREAS, Calvary Baptist Church has been led by 18 pastors in its history; the Reverend Melvin B. Poe has been pastor since 1992, and other staff members include Luke Parker, Minister of Music and Church Growth, and David Hagan, Minister of Students and Missions. The church has some 700 resident members and has an average participation of 450 in the two worship services each Sunday and around 300 for Sunday School; and

WHEREAS, Calvary Baptist Church now embraces a wide spectrum of vital ministries, including 40 Sunday School and Discipleship Training classes for ages nursery through senior adults, Children's and Youth Bible drills, summer Vacation Bible School which averages around 200 workers and students, the Upward Basketball ministry with over 100 participants; a fully graded music ministry which includes the Sanctuary Adult Choir, the Youth Ensemble, Signing Hands and Lifted Up (two signing ministries), Preschool Choirs and Children's Choirs; and

WHEREAS, other ministries include a fully graded missions program available from Mission Friends through Youth on Mission, Baptist Women's Group and a Men's Baptist fellowship; Youth ministries include fall and spring youth conferences, summer youth camp,

Wednesday night "Live" program as well as many opportunities for special events. Two mission teams are sent out each summer with an average participation of 75 to 80 members; and

WHEREAS, for eighty years, this vital and committed community of faith has striven to live out its vision of ministry and service to God and humankind; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we join with the pastors and members of Calvary Baptist Church in Union City as they celebrate the eightieth anniversary of their common life together in faithful service to their Creator and Savior, always working to do God's will in the world.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we offer them our best wishes for continuing success and satisfaction as they continue their fruitful ministries, and for much happiness in the years to come.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.